

BAGRAM NEWS EXPRESS



AIRPOWER IS THE POWER OF AIRMEN

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The 455th AEW Supplies the Fight



A C-130 Hercules aircraft assigned to the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron launches from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. C-130s perform a variety of missions here including strategic airlift, aeromedical evacuation and personnel transport. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

By: Major John Puckett
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

Earlier this month in Afghanistan, a small unit of coalition ground forces found themselves in a tight spot. The unit had already traveled a great distance to support an operation aimed squarely

at the Taliban and they'd exhausted their food and water. Navigating through a deep gorge in a mountainous river valley, the situation was quickly deteriorating. Now the supporters needed support.

That's when they called the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing. "A major part of the Wing's mis-

sion is to supply the fight," said Col. Jack Briggs II, commander of the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing. "And the Wing's airlift squadron, the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, performed that mission in an outstanding manner by flying

See Drop, Next

Drop, Cont.

a C-130 aircraft into a hostile environment to supply ground forces that were essentially trapped in a river valley."

Rugged mountain sides rising up from the valley created a narrow 'V' and supplying the ground forces with food and water meant flying a C-130 through the 'V.'

A tight fit? Certainly. And a tight fit made even more dangerous by hostile forces that were positioned in the rocks taking aim at the big airplane.

"After we received this mission and started planning for it, we knew it would be a special flight," said Maj. Eric Dolan, navigator of the C-130. "We did a pre-mission analysis to see if we split that 'V' and dropped in the valley, would we then have enough power to climb out."

Joining Major Dolan on this emergency airlift mission to resupply the depleted ground unit was the crew of pilot, Capt. P.J. LaBarbera; co-pilot, Capt. Lance Hollaway; Joint Precision Airdrop System operator, 1st Lt A.J. Standeford; engineer, Senior Master Sgt. Cyrus Snider; and two loadmasters, Tech. Sgt. Matt Ericson and Staff Sgt. Brad Emmett.

The entire crew hails from the Air National Guard's 182nd Airlift Wing in Peoria, Illinois, and they're flying in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. And though they train as realistically as possible in Illinois, their mission into the 'V' confirmed that some circumstances and surroundings just can't be simulated.

"The mountains in Illinois aren't as high and treacherous as they are here," joked Sergeant Emmett.

Complicating the already hazardous airlift mission was the weight

of the load that had to be dropped—too heavy for the C-130 to split the 'V' and climb out. So the crew decided to halve the load and make two flights. This meant, fly the mission to drop one load on target and return to Bagram Airfield to reload and fly the 'V' a second time.

"The entire mission probably lasted more than eight hours," Major Dolan said. "It was sort of complicated. We had to fly between the rocks, find the drop zone, deliver the load and turn around and do it again."

Bad weather made the flights even more difficult.

"I couldn't actually see the mountains or the drop zone," Captain LaBarbera said. "We were completely IMC—instrument meteorological conditions—the whole time.

And on top of that, we had a malfunctioning anti-icing system which meant ice was building heavy on the left wing."

Safety of flight was obviously important, but successful completion of the mission meant delivering the goods on target.

"The drop zones we're trained to hit are fairly large," Sergeant Snider said. "But this mission didn't have a standard-sized drop zone."

In aircrew-talk, 'not standard-sized' means small, like hitting a postage stamp from thousands of feet up.

The coalition ground force was growing desperate and, by the time the C-130 lifted into sky, gave word that recovering just a fraction of the load might save them. The 774th EAS responded by hitting the postage stamp of a drop zone



The 455th Air Expeditionary Wing supplies the fight anywhere at any time. Often cargo aircraft must traverse the austere environment of Afghanistan to ensure proper equipment gets to the war fighter on the ground and humanitarian aid gets to the Afghan people. (Courtesy photo)

with every load and the ground force recovered them all, sixteen in total.

Sergeant Snider credits Lieutenant Standeford's use of JPADS, with contributing to the accuracy of the drop and helping the crew hit the drop zone.

"JPADS is like a smart bomb for beans and bullets," Sergeant Snider said. And according to him, both flights of the mission were conducted with 'bingo' fuel, meaning as little fuel as possible, to avoid any extra weight.

"When you're flying low and slow, flaps down and no maneuvering, you don't want to be too heavy in case you have to climb out."

And in that position, what happens if enemy fire starts coming in?

"We've got a plan for that," Sergeant Snider said. "It's called, hope they don't hit us."



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Monitoring the airfield under the watchful eye of Merlin



A new Merlin bird radar system has been installed at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The system, already in use at various stateside locations, tracks migratory patterns and gives real-time locations of birds on and around the airfield. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

**By: Staff Sgt. Richard Williams
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—The airfield managers here have a new tool in the arsenal to help aircraft avoid bird and other wildlife while taking off or landing.

This tool, known as the ‘Merlin’ system, is a portable or movable radar system based on marine radar technology that can be purchased off the shelf, according to Ron Merritt, president of De-Tech Incorporated.

“It is the same type of system you see on fishing boats and commercial cruise liners,” Mr. Merritt said. “It is a standard

marine radar system that is optimized and processed to detect birds and other living things in the atmosphere.”

Though the Merlin system is employed at various home station locations, this is the first system to be installed in a combat zone, according to Mr. Merritt.

“It is interesting to have it deployed in a combat zone because the mission tempo and mission requirements are such that there is an urgency here we do not see in the stateside locations,” Mr. Merritt said.

“When the Air Force BASH team and the USDA pointed to Bagram as a place to use this system in a combat scenario it suggested you obviously have a bird strike issue here, and that is not a good

thing because you can’t accomplish the mission if you can’t get off the ground.”

Mr. Merritt has been involved with the Air Force Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard program since the late 1980’s and has really noticed the advancements and innovations used to protect aircraft and aircrews from this threat.

He said one of the biggest advantages to the system is its real-time, constant recording of data and the range and distance at which the system can see and track potential hazards to the airfield.

“The reason we use radar verses just standing outside and looking at binocu-

See , Merlin Next

Merlin, Cont.

lars is, radar can see a target 15 or 20 miles away,” he said. “It is also constantly looking and it doesn’t get tired, it can see in the dark and it can see through in-climate weather.”

Mr. Merritt said the system is fairly simple, a vertically and horizontally spinning S-band radar tracks movement on, and in, the skies around the airfield. The data is then fed into a computer system which calculates height and distance of any birds in the area allowing air traffic control to notify the aircrews of a potential hazard.

“It is also used as a data collection tool allowing the study of migratory data,” he said. “This can potentially allow units to schedule take-off and landing times around known bird movements, even if a take-off time is adjusted

by five or ten minutes.”

Since it is a fairly inexpensive system, Mr. Merritt said if the Air Force can save one aircraft engine and potentially save the lives of aircrews, the system has paid for itself.

“Our goal here is to lower the total number of BASH incidents,” said Tech. Sgt. Sean Wakeman, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing safety office.

“We want our air traffic controllers to have this tool to find possible bird concentrations so our aircraft can avoid these areas.”

Sergeant Wakeman, deployed from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., and a native of Holland, Mich., said the ability to identify potential threats and avoid them is as important as saving the money and work hours it takes to clean up and repair aircraft once they have hit a bird.

“We have been able to reduce the

number of bird strikes greatly from the same time last year through conventional means,” Sergeant Wakeman said. “But the number is still not enough.”

“You do not want to launch an aircraft into a flock of 250 snow geese the same as you wouldn’t launch an aircraft if there were a truck parked in the middle of the runway,” Mr. Merritt said.

Mr. Merritt said this system helps give the Air Force the ability to make an educated risk management assessment as to mission requirements verses potential risk to aircraft and aircrew and that information can be vital to a successful mission here.

Because of the mission here, Mr. Merritt said there may be times when aircraft and aircrews may not be able to delay. “But we are giving the pilots and the ground crews a little more atmospheric awareness and that is important,” he said.



Mr. Mike Bierman, a contractor with Detect-Inc, installs a Merlin bird radar system at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The Merlin system uses S-band radio waves to calculate and track locations and record data to track migratory patterns of birds in the area. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

455th ESFS Airman receives Purple Heart



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Giovanni Flores, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, receives a Purple Heart Medal from Col. Jack Briggs, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Commander, during a ceremony at Bagram Airfield, June 11, 2010. Airman Flores is deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., and is a Dallas, Texas native. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

**By: Staff Sgt. Richard Williams
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— On June 11, 2010, Col. Jack Briggs, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Commander, honored Airman 1st Class Giovanni Flores with the Order of the Purple Heart, in front of more than 75 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Airmen.

"This is a rare but distinguished occasion for all of us," Col. Briggs said. "To have an Airman with us who has earned a Purple Heart."

Colonel Briggs gave a brief history of the award, which was created by General George Washington on Aug. 7, 1782. "The original Purple Heart was a purple cloth cut into the shape of a heart," he said. "And he only gave out three."

Airman Flores, deployed from Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., and a Dallas, Texas native, said it was an honor to receive the award. "I was just doing my job," he said.

Airman Flores recognized the efforts of the 455th ESFS Airmen saying, "They are an awesome team and they do a great job."

Even though they are working long hours in defense of the base, Airmen Flores said they are still keeping the perimeter safe and that is the important thing.

Airman Flores received his Purple Heart for injuries received during a pre-dawn attack when he was hit with shrapnel from an indirect fire attack on his position.

Colonel Briggs repeated the message General Washington gave to his troops when he honored them, "Let it be known that he who wears the Military Order of the Purple

Heart has given his blood in defense of his homeland and shall forever be revered by his fellow countrymen.

"That is a pretty powerful statement," Colonel Briggs said.

"I was doing what I was supposed to do and I don't expect any reward for anything I do. I just want to do my job and do it the best I can," Airman Flores said.

Col. Briggs addressed the rest of the 455th ESFS 'Defenders' at the end of the ceremony saying, "We are here to honor the sacrifices of one of your Airmen, but each and every one of you make me extremely proud."

"You will stand where few people will, in the face of danger to protect us all and that makes me proud, very proud," said Colonel Briggs. "As an American and as your commander."

455TH AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING

WARRIOR OF THE WEEK

Staff Sgt. Tomeka Gordon, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Chaplains Corps



Staff Sgt. Tomeka Gordon is this week's 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Warrior of the Week. She is a Chaplain's assistant assigned to the 455th AEW Chaplaincy Corps. An Andalusia, Ala., native, Sergeant Gordon is deployed

from the 81st Training Wing, Kessler Air Force Base, Miss.

As a religious support team member at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital, Sergeant Gordon supports the religious diversity of more than 300 hospital staff

members and a monthly average of more than 600 patients. She supports various Wounded Warrior projects at the medical facility and also assists with patient transfer to and from aeromedical evacuation flights daily. Sergeant Gordon provides spiritual guidance in a high stress area of Bagram Airfield.

Her supervision nominated Sergeant Gordon because she is an outstanding supporter to the wounded warriors and the Craig Joint Theater Hospital staff. She is always willing to help when they need extra support in the emergency room. Working in the hospital can be very difficult. She has had to support needs outside of her careerfield to include guarding inpatient enemy patients, aeromedical evacuation skills, patient care, and trauma response. Sergeant Gordon is always willing to support the hospital staff in any way possible with a smile on her face and a helping hand to lend.

STORY IDEAS
STARTING A NEW MISSION
MEDIA QUESTIONS

Contact your
455th Public Affairs Office
@ DSN 431-2371
or email @
455aew.publicaffairs@bagb.afcent.af.mil

~~EVERYONE~~
~~Employees:~~



Must wash their hands
before returning to work...

The "Vulgar Vultures:" A Brief History of the 455th Bombardment Group during World War II

By: Ashley Armes, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Historian

The 455th Air Expeditionary Wing traces its heritage to the "Vulgar Vultures" of the 455th Bombardment Group (Heavy) of World War Two. Activated June 1, 1943 in Alamogordo, N.M., the group was comprised of four squadrons: the 740th, 741st, 742nd, and 743rd Bombardment Squadrons. Members of the group trained at various locations across the United States before joining up at Langley Field, Va. in October 1943. There, the unit prepared for its upcoming deployment to Italy. In late December, the group's aircrews flew their new B-24Hs to Italy, stopping in Florida, Trinidad, British Guiana, Brazil, Morocco and Tunisia, arriving at their destination the first week of February. For the next 20 months, the 455th Bombardment Group called San Giovanni, Italy, home.

As part of the 15th Air Force, on February 16, 1944 the 455th BG flew its first of 253 combat missions. During its combat tenure, the group engaged primarily in the bombardment of strategic targets like marshalling yards, oil refineries, harbors, factories, and airdromes in Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, and

the Balkans.

The 455th BG received a Distinguished Unit Citation (DUC) for an April 2, 1944 mission against a ball-



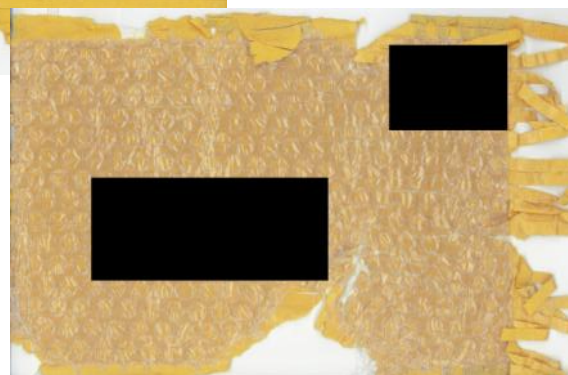
The 455th Bombardment Group emblem.

bearing plant in Steyr, Austria. Together with other units, the mission resulted in 27 enemy fighters destroyed, 17 probably destroyed, three damaged, with four 455th BG B-24s lost. The unit's second DUC was awarded for actions on 26 Jun

1944, when the unit proceeded with its attack of an oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria, despite severe Axis fighter opposition. On the way to the target, the group encountered approximately 20 enemy fighters. Then, the group came upon a second wave of enemy fighters, this time facing 60 twin-engine fighters in a series of head-on attacks and heavy machine guns. The bombers overcame a final set of 60 enemy fighters, and battled their way to the objective, and successfully dropped their bombs. In all, the mission accounted for 34 enemy fighters destroyed, and the 455 BG lost 10 of its 36 bombers.

In addition to earning two distinguished unit citations, the 455th BG also supported ground forces at Anzio and Cassino in March 1944. Late that summer, the unit knocked out gun positions in preparation for the invasion of Southern France. Lastly, the 455 BG played an integral role in the final Allied push through Italy in April 1945 by targeting bridges, gun positions, and troop concentrations.

With the conclusion of WWII, the group was inactivated September 9, 1945.



Camp Cunningham Tips of the Week

455th Air Expeditionary Wing Dress and Appearance Standards

PROPER WEAR OF ABU PATROL CAP



*AFI 36 - 2903, DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL, Table 2.2.
Men's Battle Dress Uniform, page 56*

Headgear (BDU Cap) Mandatory - ABU rules apply because it is the same style hat

Squarely on the head with no hair protruding in front of the cap; when not being worn, may be stowed in either of the lower cargo pockets on the trousers.

BDU caps required for all deployments, field training, mobility exercises and recalls.

Hat may not be pushed, rolled, folded or tucked in. (e.g.; Ranger Fold) Plain without design.

AFCENTI 36-2903; DRESS AND APPEARANCE OF AIR FORCE PERSONNEL DEPLOYED TO USCENCOM AOR

3.1.2. ABU caps will not be rolled, tucked or otherwise formed (Ranger Roll and other adjustments are not authorized). Caps will be worn in their natural form.

Bagram Airfield Air Force PT Uniform Standards...

Shirt must fit properly.

Wear shorts at the waist.

Wear white socks not black socks.



Shirt must be tucked in.

Do not roll up your shorts.

TATTOOS are not to exceed over 1/4 of the exposed body part. Excessive tattoos are required to be removed upon notification of the commander. If you have a tattoo in question seek guidance from your chain of command.



YOU CAN'T RUN FROM THE RULES

SARC FAQs

Sexual Assault Prevention Safety/Risk Reduction Information:

Sexual Assault can occur in any type of relationship, but most perpetrators of sexual assault are known to their victims. Among victims ages 18 to 29, two-thirds had a prior relationship with the offender. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reports that, in 2000, 6 in 10 rape or sexual assault victims said that they were assaulted by an intimate partner, relative, friend, or acquaintance. Call the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) at 431-4060 or contact via Command Post at 431-4400 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or D-SARC (Deployed SARC); you may also call 431-4060 or 431-4400 via Command Post for assistance.

Always take a Wingman

If you are interested in becoming a
Victim Advocate, contact
Capt. Jose Milan
DSN: 318-431-4060
455aew.sarc@bgab.afcent.af.mil



The Eagle Eyes program is an Air Force anti-terrorism initiative that enlists the eyes and ears of Air Force members and citizens in the war on terror. Eagle Eyes teaches people about the typical activities terrorists engage in to plan their attacks. Armed with this information, anyone can recognize elements of potential terror planning when they see it. You are encouraged to learn the categories of suspicious behavior and stay attuned to your surroundings.



•Surveillance – Recording or monitoring of activities

•Elicitation – People or organizations attempting to gain information about military operations, capabilities or people.

•Tests of Security – Any attempts to measure reaction time to security breaches or to penetrate physical security barriers or procedures in order to assess strengths and weaknesses.

•Acquiring Supplies – Purchasing or stealing military sensitive equipment (ACOGS, NVGs, AN-PEQ 15), weapons, ammunition, uniforms, passes or badges or any other controlled items.

•Suspicious Persons – People who do not belong in the workplace or base.

•Dry Run – Putting people into positions and moving them around according to their plan without actually committing the terrorist act.

•Deploying Assets – People and supplies getting into position to commit the act.

All Bagram personnel (military and civilian) are vulnerable to exploitation. The Eagle Eyes program relies on everyone to report suspicious activity they observe. If you notice any suspicious activity with an immediate threat, report the incident to the Provost Marshall's office or Security Forces. If the incident is just suspicious, please call AFOSI at 481-8469.

NEWS BRIEFS

NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING: All Air Force members are required to in-process with PERSCO. The in-processing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the area of responsibility for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, visit Finance in the crow's nest tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not in process with PERSCO, visit PERSCO located in Bldg. 700 near the passenger terminal. Call 431-2070/4409 for more information.

COMBAT O: Combat Orientation is every Friday at 1245Z/0515L at the MWR Clamshell. Uniform is Air Force PT uniform for fitness assessment. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Airfield. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.

BAF MAIL:

BAF residents, ensure individuals sending mail have your most current contact information. Ensuring proper postal codes are used alleviates any delays in receiving your mail. Below is the contact information required for individuals to receive mail.

NAME - (Eg. Jane Doe; no rank)

UNIT - (Eg. 455 ECS/SCXK)

Bagram Airfield or BAF

APO AE 09352

CITIZENSHIP FOR MILITARY MEMBERS:

If you are a deployed member of the U.S. Armed Forces and interested in becoming a U.S. citizen, you may be eligible to apply for citizenship under a special provision in the Immigration and Nationality Act. The Combined Joint Task Force 101 legal client service office can assist and conduct naturalization ceremonies on Bagram Airfield in May and November of each year. For any questions or assistance contact the CJTF- 101 legal client service office at 481-8540.

COMBAT STRESS: has two new programs to help servicemembers cope with traumatic events. Trauma Restoration helps individuals overcome stress reactions from traumatic combat and operational events they've experienced, while Trauma Resiliency training helps the individual prepare for successfully performing in a future potentially traumatizing event. Groups are available each week-contact CSC for further information at 431-4639 or view the RC East CSC website at <http://bgrma7afgmedsh1/CSC/default.aspx>.

455th AEW Safety tip of the week

REFLECTIVE BELTS- The wear of a reflective belt (any color but pink) is mandatory from dusk until dawn while in duty uniform. When worn, the reflective belt will be positioned around the waist, not diagonally across the shoulder, except when operating an all terrain vehicle. Personnel who do not have a reflective belt or reflective vest shall get one immediately, and will carry an operational flashlight (turned on) during hours of darkness or reduced visibility until they have the required reflective gear. Reflective gear will not be worn during tactical operations. If you have questions, please contact the Safety Office at 431-4743

455th AEW Financial Tip of the Week

HARDSHIP DUTY PAY- Hardship duty pay is \$100/month for Afghanistan but is prorated. You have to actually be in theater at least 30 days to receive the entitlement. You have two options: 1. You can come in to the finance office here to file for it with a copy of your orders. 2. You can wait until you get back to home station finance and file for it when you complete your travel voucher and receive the lump sum for the timeframe you were deployed in theater.

455th AEW Policies and Procedures

FLIGHTLINE PHOTOGRAPHY — Personnel on Bagram Airfield are not authorized to take still photography or video imagery on the airfield flightline unless authorized by the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs office and 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. Images must be used for official use only. Violators of this policy will be detained and possibly taken into custody. Call 455th AEW/PA at 431-2371 for more information.



